



Smithsonian  
*Archives of American Art*

**Grant Wood**

**A Finding Aid to the Grant Wood Papers,  
1930-1983, in the Archives of American Art**

by Erin Corley

Funding for the processing and digitization of this collection  
was provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

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**Contact Information**

Reference Department  
Archives of American Art  
Smithsonian Institution  
Washington, D.C. 20560  
[www.aaa.si.edu/askus](http://www.aaa.si.edu/askus)

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## Collection Overview

<b>Repository:</b>	Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution
<b>Creator:</b>	Wood, Grant
<b>Title:</b>	Grant Wood papers
<b>Dates:</b>	1930-1983
<b>Quantity:</b>	0.2 linear feet
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Grant Wood papers measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1983. Included are three newspaper obituaries for Grant Wood and six letters to art educator, Zenobia Ness, discussing his exhibition plans, paintings, Stone City Art Colony, and the Federal Public Works of Art Projects. The collection also contains two letters, including a Stone City brochure, to Walter Pritchard Eaton, Professor of Drama at Yale University. Also found are writings, newspaper clippings containing articles on Wood, and other printed material. Photographs in the collection, some of which are signed, are of Wood in his studio and at the Artist Camp at Stone City, and various works of art.

## Administrative Information

### Provenance

The collection was donated by Zelia Mitchell, a friend of the Ness family, in 1984 and was microfilmed upon receipt. The two letters to Eaton, with the enclosed Stone City Art Colony brochure, were donated by Charles E. Feinberg, 1955-1962, and also microfilmed.

### Related Material

The Archives of American Art holds several additional small collections related to the Grant Wood papers, including a thesis by Kenneth Goldberg entitled, "The Paintings of Grant Wood," microfilmed on reel 420; the Marian S. Mayer research material on Grant Wood, partially microfilmed on reels 863-864; and *Return from Bohemia*, a typescript of the beginning of an autobiography written by Grant Wood and microfilmed on reel D24.

Eighteen scrapbooks and albums of news clippings, post cards, letters, snapshots, sketches and related ephemera on Grant Wood assembled over a period of 40 years by Nan Wood Graham, Grant Wood's sister, are located at the Figge Art Museum, Davenport, Iowa. Thirteen of the scrapbooks have been digitized and are available online as the [University of Iowa Libraries' Figge Art Museum Grant Wood Digital Collection](#). The Figge's archive also contains several hundred artifacts related to Grant Wood.

### Alternative Form Available

The collection was digitized in 2005 and is available online via AAA's website.

### Processing Information

The collection was microfilmed upon receipt on reels 3176 and D10. It was fully processed, arranged and described by Erin Corley and scanned in 2005, with funding provided by the Terra Foundation for American Art.

### Preferred Citation

Grant Wood papers, 1930-1983. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution.

## Restrictions on Access

The collection has been digitized and is available online via AAA's website.

## Ownership and Literary Rights

Grant Wood's papers are owned by the Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution. Literary rights as possessed by the donor have been dedicated to public use for research, study, and scholarship. The collection is subject to all copyright laws.

## Biographical Note

Grant Wood was born near Anamosa, Iowa, in 1891. In 1901 he moved with his family to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, where he developed an interest in art, and participated in the Cedar Rapids Art Association. He attended the Minneapolis School of Design and Handicraft as well as the Art Institute of Chicago. Wood taught art in Cedar Rapids public schools, and became an active member of the Iowa art community, promoting local artists and public art projects. In 1932, he and fellow artists founded the Stone City Art Colony. The colony only lasted two years, and in 1933 he became an art professor at the University of Iowa, where he would continue to teach until his death. Wood also served as spokesman for the concept of Regionalism in art and lectured throughout the United States. In 1934 he was appointed director of the Federal Public Works of Art Projects for Iowa, and organized artists for public mural projects. Grant Wood died in 1942, at the age of 51.

## Scope and Content Note

The Grant Wood papers measure 0.2 linear feet and date from 1930 to 1983. Included are three newspaper obituaries for Grant Wood and six letters to art educator, Zenobia Ness, discussing his exhibition plans, paintings, Stone City Art Colony, and the Federal Public Works of Art Projects. The collection also contains two letters, including a Stone City brochure, to Walter Pritchard Eaton, Professor of Drama at Yale University. Also found are writings, newspaper clippings containing articles on Wood, and other printed material. Photographs in the collection, some of which are signed, are of Wood in his studio and at the Artist Camp at Stone City, and various works of art.

## Arrangement

Due to the small size of this collection, items are categorized into one series consisting of eight folders. Items are arranged chronologically within each folder.

## Index Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Archives of American Art under the following index terms. People, families and organizations are listed under "Subjects" when they are the topic of collection contents and under "Names" when they are creators or contributors.

### Subjects:

Eaton, Walter Prichard, 1878-1957  
Ness, Zenobia  
Stone City Colony and Art School (Stone City, Iowa)

### Subjects-Topical:

Painters -- Iowa -- Cedar Rapids  
Painting, American  
Painting -- Middle West

## Series Descriptions/Container Listing

### Series 1: Grant Wood Papers, 1930-1983 (Box 1; 0.2 linear feet)

<b>Box</b>	<b>Folder</b>	
1	1	Biographical Data, Newspaper Obituaries, 1942
	2	Letters to Mrs. Henry Ness [Zenobia B. Ness], 1930-1931, 1933, 1940
	3	Letters to Walter Pritchard Eaton, 1933
	4	Writings, re: Business Depressions, 1932
	5	Newspaper Clippings, 1930-1936, 1968, 1983, undated
	6	Printed Material, Miscellaneous, undated
	7	Photographs, Grant Wood and his works, undated
	8	Photographs, Stone City Art Colony, undated